

IN THE HIGH COURT OF SINDH, KARACHI
Criminal Jail Appeal No. 494 of 2023

Before:
Justice Zafar Ahmed Rajput (ACJ)
Justice Jan Ali Junejo

Appellant	:	Naeem Khan s/o Ghafoor, through Mr. Muhammad Farooq, Advocate
Respondent	:	The State, through Mr. Abrar Ali Khichi, Addl. Prosecutor General (Add. PG), Sindh
Date of hearing	:	05.11.2025
Date of order	:	<u>05.11.2025</u>

JUDGMENT

ZAFAR AHMED RAJPUT, ACJ. – Impugned in this CrI. Appeal is the Judgment, dated 31.07.2023, passed in Sessions Case No. 973 of 2023, arisen out of FIR No. 86 of 2023, registered at P.S. Boat Basin, Karachi under sections 9 (1) (3) (d) of the Control of Narcotic Substances (Amendment) Act, 2022 (**“Federal Amendment Act, 2022”**), whereby the Sessions Judge, Karachi-South (**“Trial Court”**) convicted the appellant for the said offence and sentenced him to suffer R.I for fourteen years and to pay a fine of Rs. 4,00,000/-, or in case of default thereof, he should undergo S.I. for three months more. The benefit of section 382-B, CrPC has been extended to him.

2. It is alleged that, on 06.02.2023 at 1245 hrs., a police party headed by SIP Muhammad Rafiq of P.S. Boat Basin, Karachi arrested the appellant from inside street katchra Kundi (*trash heap*), Shah Rasool Colony, Clifton, Karachi for possessing 8650 grams charas (*cannabis*); for that, he was booked in the aforesaid FIR. After usual investigation, police submitted the charge-sheet against the appellant and the Trial Court framed the charge against him, to which he pleaded not guilty, which followed his full-dressed trial, conviction and sentence, as mentioned above, vide impugned judgment.

3. Learned counsel for the appellant has contended that the appellant was charged and convicted under sections 9 (1) (3) (d) of the Federal Amendment Act, 2022, which was not applicable on him, as he was not arrested by any Federal Agency to attract the said provisions, but by the local police and on the day of alleged offence, i.e. 06.02.2023, the Control of Narcotics Substance (Sindh Amendment) Act, 2021 (**“Sindh Amendment Act, 2021”**) was in the field, hence, the appellant should have been charged and tried under section 9 (c) of the said Act. He has also contended that under instructions, he does not press this Appeal on merit; however, he seeks alteration of appellant’s conviction and reduction of his sentence on the grounds that the appellant is not previously convicted of any offence.

4. Learned Addl. PG has conceded to the contentions of learned counsel for the appellant that the provisions of Sindh Amendment Act, 2021 attract to the alleged offence and that there is no criminal record of the appellant.

5. We have heard the learned counsel for the appellant as well as Addl. PG and have perused the material available on record with their assistance.

6. It may be observed that the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, on 4th February, 2021 promulgated Sindh Amendment Act, 2021 whereby, *inter alia*, clause (s) of section 2 and section 9 of the Control of Narcotic Substances Act, 1997 (**“Act of 1997”**) were amended, as under: -

2. *In the Control of Narcotics Substances Act, 1997, herein after referred to as the said Act, in its application to the Province of Sindh, in section 2 –*

(i).....

(ii).....

(iii).....

(iv) *for clause (s), the following shall be substituted: -*

“(s) “narcotic drug” means-

(i) **Category (i)** *coca leaf, cannabis and poppy straw;*

(ii) **Category (ii)** *cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, midomafetamine and all*

manufactured drugs or any other substance, which Government of Sindh may, by notification in the official gazette, declare to be narcotic drug for the purpose of this Act;

9. Punishment for contravention of section 6, 6-A, 7 and 8. *Whoever contravenes the provisions of sections 6, 6-A, 7 and 8 shall be punished with--*

*(a) imprisonment which may extend to three years but shall not be less than six months, or with fine upto rupees one lac but shall not be less than rupees fifty thousand, or with both if the quantity of psychotropic substance or controlled substance or narcotic drug **category (i)** is one hundred grams or less;*

*(b) imprisonment which may extend to seven years but shall not be less than three years and shall also be liable to fine upto rupees five lac but shall not be less than rupees one lac if the quantity of psychotropic substance or controlled substance or narcotic drug **category (i)** exceeds one hundred grams but does not exceed one kilogram, or if the quantity of narcotic drug **category (ii)** is **fifty gram** or less;*

*(c) death or imprisonment for life or imprisonment for a term which may extend to fourteen years and shall also be liable to fine which may be upto one million rupees, if the quantity of narcotic drug **category (i) and (ii)**, psychotropic substance or controlled substance exceeds the limit specified in clause (b):*

Provided that if the quantity of narcotic drug category (i), psychotropic substance or controlled substance exceeds ten kilograms or narcotic drug category (ii), exceeds two kilograms, the punishment shall not be less than imprisonment for life.”
(Emphasis supplied)

7. On 5th September, 2022 *Majlis-e-Shoora* (Parliament) promulgated Federal Amendment Act, 2022 thereby, *inter alia*, it amended section 9 of the Act of 1997 and provided punishments for contravention of sections 6, 7, and 8 of the Act of 1997 regarding narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and controlled substances as given in the column (3) of the TABLES with regard to offence committed as mentioned in column (2) thereof.

8. It may be observed that under Article 142(b) of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, *Majlis-e-Shoora* (Parliament) and Provincial Assembly both have power to make laws with respect to criminal law, criminal procedure and evidence. While under provision of Article 143

of the Constitution, laws enacted by Parliament have been given over-riding and superimposing effect over laws enacted by a Provincial Assembly of any of the provinces, and in case of any clash or repugnancy between the two, the laws enacted by the Parliament prevails.

9. We take the view that Sindh Amendment Act, 2021 and Federal Amendment Act, 2022 are not *quae inter dissident*. Sindh Amendment Act, 2021 was made applicable in Province of Sindh meaning thereby Provincial Police of Sindh was empowered to take cognizance of any offence under the Act of 1997 while, under Federal Amendment Act, 2022, the Federal Agencies i.e. Anti Narcotic Force (ANF), Customs, etc. are empowered to take cognizance of the offence under the Act of 1997 throughout Pakistan including Province of Sindh. Moreover, Federal Amendment Act, 2022 has not repealed the Sindh Amendment Act, 2021.

10. We are, therefore, of the view that in the instant case, FIR lodged and the appellant tried and convicted under sections 9 (1) column (3) (d) of the TABLE of the Federal Amendment Act, 2022 was not in accordance with law. As on the day of commission of alleged offence i.e. 06.02.2023, the Sindh Amendment Act, 2021 was enforced in the Province of Sindh. The instant case has not been lodged by any Federal Agency, i.e. A.N.F, Pakistan Customs, etc. Hence, the provisions of Act of 1997, as amended vide Federal Amendment Act, 2022, did not attract to the case in hand, but the provisions of section 9 (c) of the Sindh Amendment Act, 2021, which provides sentence for contravention of section 6 of the Act (ibid) *death or imprisonment for life for or a term which may extend to fourteen years and shall also be liable to fine which may be upto one million rupees, if the quantity of narcotic drug category (i), exceeds the limit specified in clause (b) i.e. one kilogram grams*. Hence, we modify the conviction of the appellant recorded by the Trial Court under section 9 (1) column (3) (d) of

the Federal Amendment Act, 2022 and convert it in section 9 (c) of the Sindh Amendment Act, 2021.

11. It is well established that punishment for an offence serves not only as a means of retribution but also as a tool for deterrence and a mechanism to strengthen the fabric of society through the rehabilitation of the offender. The law itself classifies offences distinctly. In some instances, punishment is mandated with the expression “*not less than*,” denoting a fixed minimum, while in others, the law provides flexibility through terms like “*may extend to*” or “*may extend up to*.” This legislative contrast signifies that, in the latter category, the courts are expected to exercise judicial discretion by taking into account the specific facts and circumstances of the case. These are the kinds of offences where a lesser punishment may serve the ends of justice by allowing room for the offender’s moral and social reformation.

12. In the case of Niaz-ud-Din v. The State (2007 SCMR 206) the Apex Court, in a case of recovery of 5-kilogram heroin, reduced the sentence of imprisonment from 10 to 6 years considering that the accused was not previously convicted and there was no instance of his involvement in drug trafficking, hence, he was given a chance in his life to rehabilitate himself. In the instant case, since the appellant is neither previously convicted of any offence nor is there any instance of his involvement in narcotics cases, we are inclined to give him an opportunity for reformation. We, therefore, deem it appropriate to reduce his sentence awarded by the Trial Court i.e. R.I for fourteen (14) years to R.I. for seven (07) years; however, the fine amount i.e. Rs.400,000/- and sentence in default thereof i.e. S.I. for three (03) months more shall remain intact.

13. The instant Crl. Appeal stands dismissed with above alteration in conviction and modification in sentence.

Acting Chief

Justice

Judge

Athar Zai